

# Long Beach: **Building Momentum**

In 2011, the Year in Review was titled "A Great City Steps Forward." In 2012, the city's steps grew larger and more plentiful. As a result, 2012 will be remembered as the year Long Beach firmed up its footing, crystallized its vision and began building momentum.



## YEAR IN REVIEW **2012 LONG BEACH** PLANNING COMMISSION



# Downtown Plan

There are many existing stable, thriving neighborhoods that make up the Downtown. It is important to recognize that the purpose of the Downtown Plan is to protect and maintain those successful elements, while giving guidance on development and design standards to ensure that future developments will build on those successes. The Plan endeavors to balance the needs and desires of Downtown residents and businesses.

For four years, Planning staff has worked extensively with the community, as well as the Planning Commission and City Council, to gather their input. By providing direction in terms of land use, urban design, historic preservation, open space requirements, adaptive re-use, signage and other important aspects, the Downtown Plan creates a more streamlined, equitable process that makes sure future development projects and public improvements are a more viable and cohesive fit to the existing urban core.

The Downtown Planned Development District (PD-30) was adopted in 2000, and provided a regulatory framework for continued development of Downtown Long Beach.

The development boom in the early to mid 2000's resulted in several projects that, although consistent with the overall vision for Downtown, were in conflict with the specific development standards. As a result, several amendments to PD-30 were approved to make way for the various projects.

The Downtown Plan was originally drafted in conjunction with a community-based Downtown Steering Committee. A series of community meetings were held to review and refine the Downtown Plan. The revised Downtown Plan and its associated Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) were released to the public in December 2010 for a 115-day public review period. The Downtown Plan was approved by the Planning Commission in December 2011 and the City Council adopted the Plan and certified its EIR in January 2012.

## The key enhancements of the Downtown Plan include:

- Expansion of the Downtown Plan area from 467 acres to 725 acres.
- A comprehensive set of design standards for new development that provide criteria for a range of building types.
- A simplified land use table that combines the existing subareas into one district.
- Modified height limits that focus development intensity in the core areas of the Downtown while limiting the intensity of development in and around existing residential neighborhoods.
- Parking, open space, and building setback requirements that are more reflective of a thriving Downtown environment.
- Adaptive reuse standards and incentives and a list of historically significant properties eligible to use the incentives.
- New guidelines and standards for the streetscape and public realm.

Today, we're proud of the direction we have taken. Our goals remain strong. The projects profiled here are prime examples of how great things happen when planning, civic leadership and the community all come together for the good of the City of Long Beach.

## PLANNING BUREAU

### 2012 BY THE NUMBERS

1. 950 plan checks and/or requests for Planning Entitlements including Conditional and Administrative Use Permits, Site Plan Review, Standards Variances and Certificates of Appropriateness.
2. 2,800 customers seeking information, submitting for permits, or receiving "over the counter" approval at the Permit Center/Development Services Counter.
3. 410 staff-level Certificates of Appropriateness issued, including 24 projects brought before the Cultural Heritage Commission.
4. 8,732 phone calls on the Zoning Information phone line.

## Downtown Plan



## Millworks / Meeker-Baker Building

A major step in implementing the Downtown Plan was accomplished in 2012, as the Planning Commission approved entitlements for the Millworks office development project, the first large development using the Downtown Plan Program EIR. The project includes a new six-story, approximately 127,000 square-foot office building within and above the exterior façade of the landmark Meeker-Baker Building located at 650 Pine Avenue. Given the historic nature of the site and the presence of the Meeker-Baker building, the development also required a Supplemental EIR certified by the Planning Commission as well as a Certificate of Appropriateness certified by the Cultural Heritage Commission. Planning staff worked closely with the applicant and the Planning Commission to ensure an efficient and thorough review of the project, while also preserving a historic building. Construction on the project is expected to begin in 2013, bringing with it a major development to Downtown Long Beach.

## Downtown Plan



## The Promenade

The Promenade is the City's unique Downtown pedestrian walkway that stretches from Ocean Boulevard to 3rd Street. Planning for the revitalization of The Promenade began in 2005. The Promenade Master Plan incorporated pedestrian-oriented improvements on the three blocks of The Promenade from Ocean Boulevard to the north side of 3rd Street, connecting the Downtown waterfront to three blocks of vastly improved residential, commercial, retail and restaurant venues. What was once a stark, under-utilized pedestrian walkway in Downtown Long Beach, the Promenade now features three mixed-use developments, landscape and streetscape improvements, seating, public art plazas, Promenade Square, and a new and expanded Bikestation Long Beach that breathe life into the area.

This architectural elevation drawing depicts a three-story building facade. The ground floor features a storefront with large display windows and double doors, set within a light-colored stone or concrete base. The upper two floors are constructed of red brick with decorative vertical piers. The second floor has arched windows, while the third floor features a mix of arched and rectangular windows. The drawing is presented over a technical background with various dimensions and grid lines, including 3600, 1400, 1100, 2450, 3000, and 18M².

Built in 1905, the American Hotel is one of the rare surviving original commercial buildings in Downtown Long Beach. Although retrofitted with a nominal seismic upgrade, subsequent assessments concluded that considerable renovation of the structural, mechanical and electrical systems will be required in order for the building to be made functional and habitable. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued and awarded to Urbana Development (Developer) for preservation, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of the American Hotel. This project will result in the restoration of the historic facade, as well as eliminate a physical and economic blight in the Downtown. The Developer will adaptively reuse the 5,100 square-foot site as a mixed-used structure, including a complete restoration of the existing facade and shell, with new creative office space on the upper floors and retail on the ground floor. The proposed project will include approximately 3,670 square feet of retail space on the ground floor, and 7,000 square feet of creative office space on the second and third floors.



## Douglas Park

The 238-acre Douglas Park plan is designed as a master planned, mixed-use project that will consist of up to four million square feet of office, research and development, retail, light industrial, aviation-related manufacturing and ancillary uses; a hotel, and approximately 10 acres of community open space.

The redevelopment of the Douglas Park mixed-use office, industrial, and hotel development saw substantial progress in 2012.

The Planning Commission approved entitlements on seven industrial buildings and a new four-story, 155-room hotel in 2011, which



set the stage for construction to commence on these projects in 2012. The Pacific Pointe North project, consisting of four industrial buildings totaling 268,684 square feet is nearing completion of construction and will be ready for occupancy in early 2013.

Additionally, construction on the three building, 405,969 square-foot Pacific Pointe South industrial project and Courtyard by Marriott hotel project is underway and expected to conclude in 2013.



## Airport Modernization

The two-year \$45 million Airport Terminal Improvement project, featuring two terminal buildings, 4,200 square feet of outdoor seating, and more than 10,000 square feet of new retail space featuring local businesses, completed construction and officially opened in December 2012. The terminal improvement project marked the completion of a larger Airport Modernization Project, which also included the construction of a nearly 2,000 car parking structure. A number of sustainable building practices were incorporated into the terminal improvements, including a solar-generating rooftop, which will offset 13 percent of the facility's demand for power. Planning staff and the Planning Commission played key roles in the planning and entitlement phases of the project.



The new concourse is modern, comfortable and inviting, with a variety of amenities including local eateries and retail outlets. The 35,000-square-foot facility was designed to maintain the airport's charm and ease of use, while accommodating three million annual passengers. It includes a state-of-the-art consolidated security screening area, spacious boarding lounges with improved seating and quality concessions featuring local businesses.



## The Palace

Built in 1929, The Palace is a historic, two-story building now restored and renovated to serve as a home to transitional age and emancipated youth. The Palace has been converted into 14 studio apartment units, offices to help provide services to the residents, and community meeting and residential gathering space, as well as retail space on the first floor that may help employ some of the residents. The renovation includes a variety of sustainability features, is registered with the U.S. Green Building Council and achieved LEED Platinum Certification. A grand opening for The Palace was held in February 2012.



## Ongoing Efforts

**MOBILITY ELEMENT** - The Planning Bureau has completed work on the Draft Mobility Element. The Draft Mobility Element is the culmination of countless community meetings and stakeholder discussions over the past five years. Through this new plan, the City of Long Beach is charting a different future that emphasizes a balanced transportation network with meaningful travel choices: walking, bicycling, public transit, and driving. The adoption of the Draft Mobility Element by the Long Beach City Council is expected in Spring 2013.

(Continued on Back Cover)

**SOUTHEAST AREA DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SEADIP)** – In May 2012, The State Department of Conservation, Strategic Growth Council recommended a Sustainable Communities Planning Grant award to the City of Long Beach to fund an amendment to the City's Local Coastal Program and Southeast Area Development and Improvement Plan (SEADIP).

A revision of SEADIP, the planning area that is the southeast gateway into Long Beach, has been a long time coming. Adopted in 1977, SEADIP is the primary planning and development guide for the southeastern portion of Long Beach. The City Council formally requested staff to identify funding to update SEADIP in December 2011. The \$929,000 award of Sustainable Communities Planning Grant funds will help Long Beach complete the SEADIP update. In January 2013, the City released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to qualified land use and planning consultants to prepare land use updates for a 1,500-acre portion of East Long Beach. This project will require the preparation of a Specific Plan and an amendment to the City's Local Coastal Program (LCP) and the SEADIP zoning district, and may also include the preparation of a Program EIR.

**LAND USE ELEMENT (LUE)** - The Land Use Element (LUE) of the General Plan is one of the most important chapters. In conjunction with the Mobility (Transportation) Element, the Land Use Element defines the future land uses for the City, and provides long-range direction for changes to the Zoning Code. The LUE is being drafted to recognize that much of the Long Beach is built out, so the focus is on conversion of a few key areas into more jobs-rich land uses over time. These areas include the Downtown and the Long Beach Boulevard corridor, and areas near the Traffic Circle and Long Beach Airport. Another primary consideration is the corridors along major streets, again in conjunction with the Mobility Element, to create more vibrant commercial districts and better transition to the adjacent established neighborhoods. A draft version of the LUE is expected to be released for public review in Summer 2013 and revised with its associated environmental review thereafter.

**LONG BEACH BOULEVARD MIDTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN (LBBMSP)** - The Long Beach Boulevard Midtown Specific Plan (LBBMSP) is an update to the PD-29 zoning to provide more design guidance and offer more incentives for certain types of transit-oriented development (TOD) near the existing Metro Blue Line light rail transit stations. The plan will focus on land uses that encourage nearby residents and workers to live more active and healthy lifestyles by creating land uses and places that encourage walking and bicycling, and by improving connections to parks and existing health care facilities along the corridor, including the Memorial Medical Center complex and St. Mary's Medical Center. The LBBMSP and its associated environmental review is underway and will be completed by the end of 2013.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION**

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